

(Washington, DC)- At an annual banquet this evening recognizing the contributions of women in government, Congresswoman Gwen Moore will receive the "First Woman" award for being the first African-American woman elected from Wisconsin to serve in the U.S. Congress. The event, organized by Wisconsin Women in Government, features U.S. Senator and former First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton as the keynote speaker.

"I am so proud to have the honor of representing Wisconsin's Fourth Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives," Congresswoman Moore said. "This award reminds me of why it is so important to fight to give my constituents the opportunities they need to overcome the many barriers they face in their own lives, be it a lack of affordable health care, or access to higher education, to name just a couple."

The "First Woman" award was created three years ago and added to the program of Wisconsin Women in Government's annual banquet, which raises money for scholarships and educational and mentoring programs for women interested in government.

"It took 150 years-from statehood in 1848, to 1998-before Wisconsin elected its first woman representative to Congress, Tammy Baldwin of Madison. And just eight years later, Wisconsin has now elected its first woman of color, Gwen Moore, from Milwaukee," Margaret Lewis, Wisconsin Women in Government's Awards Committee Chair, said. Lewis went on to explain that the "First Woman" Awards are meant to "honor the talent that surrounds us, and to remember those who have come before, making our own paths a bit easier."

Former "First Woman" award recipients include: Senator Mary Panzer, first woman Majority Leader of the Wisconsin State Senate; Barbara Lawton, Wisconsin's first woman Lieutenant Governor; and Peg Lautenschlager, Wisconsin's first woman Attorney General.

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